

Senate Resolution 656

By: Senators Butler of the 55th, Miles of the 43rd, Seay of the 34th, Tate of the 38th, Henson of the 41st and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring Xernona Clayton; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, within the roster of esteemed citizens and community leaders of the City of
3 Atlanta, none is more esteemed than Xernona Clayton; and

4 WHEREAS, Xernona Clayton was born August 30, 1930, in Muskogee, Oklahoma, where
5 her parents, Reverend James M. and Lillie Brewster, administered Indian affairs; and

6 WHEREAS, she graduated from Tennessee State Agricultural and Industrial College, now
7 Tennessee State University, in 1952 and later earned a scholarship to pursue graduate studies
8 at the University of Chicago; and

9 WHEREAS, while working for Chicago's Urban League as an undercover agent investigating
10 discrimination, she was drawn into the area of civil rights negotiating; and

11 WHEREAS, by the early 1960's, she was organizing fundraising events for the Southern
12 Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), which led to her work with Dr. Martin Luther
13 King, Jr., in Atlanta; and

14 WHEREAS, in 1968, she became the first black woman in the South to host a prime time talk
15 show on WAGA-TV; and

16 WHEREAS, in the early 1980's she was named director and vice president of public affairs
17 at Turner Broadcasting System and in 1988 assumed the position of assistant corporate vice
18 president for urban affairs; and

1 WHEREAS, she currently serves as the creator and executive producer of the Trumpet
2 Awards, a prestigious annual event that acknowledges the accomplishments of African
3 Americans and is broadcast in over 185 countries; and

4 WHEREAS, she is also the creator of the International Civil Rights Walk of Fame, which
5 is located at the Martin Luther King, Jr., historic site in Atlanta; and

6 WHEREAS, for decades she has been tirelessly devoted to promoting racial understanding
7 and is the recipient of scores of awards, including the Drum Major for Justice Award from
8 the SCLC in 2004.

9 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
10 honor Xernona Clayton as an outstanding citizen of this state and express their gratitude for
11 her generous service and significant contributions.

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
13 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to Xernona Clayton.